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10/539,010

06/15/2005

Hiroaki Yamada

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EXAMINER

IMAS, VLADIMIR

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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**BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCES**

Application Number: 10/539,010
Filing Date: June 15, 2005
Appellant(s): YAMADA ET AL.

Dion R. Ferguson
For Appellant

EXAMINER'S ANSWER

This is in response to the appeal brief filed on October 16, 2007 appealing from the Office action mailed September 17, 2007.

(1) Real Party in Interest

A statement identifying by name the real party in interest is contained in the brief.

(2) Related Appeals and Interferences

The examiner is not aware of any related appeals, interferences, or judicial proceedings which will directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the Board's decision in the pending appeal.

(3) Status of Claims

The statement of the status of claims contained in the brief is correct.

(4) Status of Amendments After Final

The appellant's statement of the status of amendments after final rejection contained in the brief is correct.

(5) Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

The summary of claimed subject matter contained in the brief is correct.

(6) Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

The appellant's statement of the grounds of rejection to be reviewed on appeal is correct.

(7) Claims Appendix

The copy of the appealed claims contained in the Appendix to the brief is correct.

(8) Evidence Relied Upon

6,022,247

Akiyama et al.

2-2000

(9) Grounds of Rejection

The following ground(s) of rejection are applicable to the appealed claims:

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Akiyama et al. (US 6,022,247).

Regarding claim 1, Akiyama et al., fig. 1-5, discloses a cassette relay block attachment structure comprising: a cassette relay block 4 having a lock portion 6, disposed inwardly of outermost wall surface of the cassette relay block, the cassette relay block being inserted into a space surrounded by peripheral walls 2a on an attaching member 2, the cassette relay block being fixed by the lock portion and a locked portion 7a located on the peripheral wall side of the attaching member.

Regarding claim 2, Akiyama et al. discloses the lock portion and locked portion are housed in the projected area of a relay attached to the cassette relay block.

Regarding claim 3 and 10, Akiyama et al. discloses the terminal housing parts (not labeled) of the cassette relay block are arranged crosswise, and the lock portion is arranged in a range surrounded by crossing outer wall surfaces of the terminal housing parts.

Regarding claim 4, 11 and 12, Akiyama et al. discloses the cassette relay block attachment structure characterized in that lock portion is a flexible lock arm 6b.

Regarding claims 5, 13-15, Akiyama et al. discloses a rib 6a provided on the opposite side to the lock portion side and for one of the cassette relay block and the peripheral walls; and a guide groove (not labeled) for slide engagement with the rib provided for the other.

Regarding claim 6, 16, 17, 18 and 19, Akiyama et al. discloses the peripheral walls 2a on the attaching side are formed as a cassette frame.

Regarding claim 7, Akiyama et al. discloses the cassette frame serves as one of the cassette relay block and other cassette electric parts mounting blocks.

Regarding claim 8, 20 Akiyama et al. discloses the inner surfaces of the peripheral walls are housed in the projected area of the relay.

Regarding claims 9, 21 and 22, Akiyama et al. discloses the cassette frames having lock members, respectively, are coupled to each other by the lock members, and

the cassette frames are coupled to a connection box body having locked members to constitute an electric connection box.

(10) Response to Argument

The Appellant has argues that "Akiyama indicates that "at given positions on the respective outside portions of the cassette blocks 3 and 4, lock claws 6 are provided as shown in FIG. 5." Thus, the lock portion cannot be considered to be inwardly of an outermost wall surface of the cassette relay block, as alleged by the Examiner and recited in claim 1. Therefore, Appellants respectfully submit that claim 1 is patentable over the applied art. Claims 2-22 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 1."

The Examiner respectfully disagrees. It is clear from fig. 1 and 5, the wall element 6a being outermost wall surface of the relay block 4, and therefore the lock portion 6b will be inwardly of an outermost wall surface of the cassette relay block.

The Appellant has also argues that "the lock portion and locked portion are housed in the projected area of a relay attached to the cassette relay block. The Examiner alleges that Akiyama discloses this aspect of the instant invention, but fails to cite where Akiyama teaches or suggests that the lock and locked portions are housed in the projected area of a relay attached to the cassette relay block."

The Examiner respectfully disagrees. As shown in fig. 2, once relay block 4 is attached to cavity 2a, the relay (not shown) can be inserted to the relay block and the

body of relay block will have projected area larger than cavity and will house the lock portion 7 and locked portion 6.

The Appellant has also argues that "the lock portion is arranged in a range surrounded by crossing outer wall surfaces of the terminal housing parts." Thus, the lock claws cannot be arranged in a range by crossing outer wall surfaces, as recited in claim 3.

The Examiner respectfully disagrees. As noted above referring to fig. 1, 2 and 5, that the lock portion 7 is arranged in a range surrounded by crossing outer wall surfaces of the terminal housing part 2.

(11) Related Proceeding(s) Appendix

No decision rendered by a court or the Board is identified by the examiner in the Related Appeals and Interferences section of this examiner's answer.

For the above reasons, it is believed that the rejections should be sustained.

Respectfully submitted,

/Vladimir Imas/

Examiner, Art Unit 2839

2/12/08

Conferees:

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Art Unit: 2800

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